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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3904th meeting of the Security Council, held on 13 July 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the occupied Arab territories", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council has considered the letters dated 18 and 22 June 1998 (S/1998/535 and S/1998/557), as well as the letters dated 8, 9 and 15 June 1998 (S/1998/481, S/1998/487 and S/1998/511), from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, and the letter dated 23 June 1998 (S/1998/558) from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States relating to the issue of Jerusalem.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance and sensitivity of the issue of Jerusalem to all parties and expresses its support for the decision of the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Government of Israel, in accordance with the Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993, that the permanent status negotiations shall cover the issue of Jerusalem. The Council therefore calls upon the parties to avoid actions which might prejudice the outcome of these negotiations.

"In the context of its previous relevant resolutions, the Security Council considers the decision by the Government of Israel on 21 June 1998 to take steps to broaden the jurisdiction and planning boundaries of Jerusalem a serious and damaging development. The Council therefore calls upon the Government of Israel not to proceed with that decision and also not to take any other steps which would prejudice the outcome of the permanent status negotiations. Further, the Council also calls upon Israel to abide scrupulously by its legal obligations and responsibilities under the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949.

"The Security Council supports the efforts of the United States aimed at breaking the stalemate in the peace process, calls upon the parties to respond positively to these efforts, notes that the Palestinian side has

already given agreement in principle to the United States proposals, and expresses the hope that the permanent status negotiations can resume and progress can be made towards the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967 and 338 (1973) of 22 October 1973.

"The Security Council will keep Israeli actions under review."